Trend unemployment rate remains steady at 5.2%

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> ⓘ **Source:** [Labour Force, Australia, January 2020](#)

Australia's trend unemployment rate remained steady at 5.2 per cent in January 2020, from a revised December 2019 figure, according to the latest information released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.
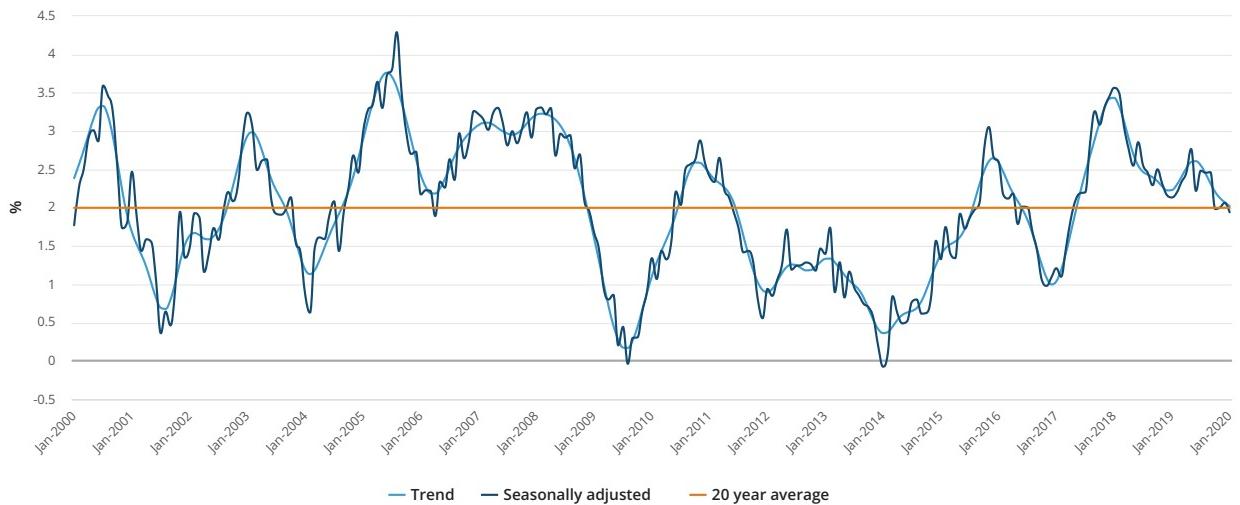
ABS Chief Economist Bruce Hockman said: "The trend unemployment rate has remained steady at 5.2 per cent since September 2019."

Employment and hours

In January 2020, trend monthly employment increased by around 20,000 people. Full-time employment increased by around 15,000 and part-time employment increased by around 5,000 people.

Over the past year, trend employment increased by around 257,000 people (2.0 per cent), in line with the average annual growth over the past 20 years (2.0 per cent).

Year on year employment change over 20 years (%)

Full-time employment growth (1.7 per cent) was above the average annual growth over the past 20 years (1.6 per

cent) and part-time employment growth (2.8 per cent) was below the average annual growth over the past 20 years (3.0 per cent).

The trend monthly hours worked increased by less than 0.1 per cent in January 2020 and by 1.3 per cent over the past year. This was lower than the 20 year average annual growth of 1.6 per cent.

Underemployment and underutilisation

The trend monthly underemployment rate remained steady at 8.5 per cent in January 2020, and increased by 0.2 percentage points over the past year.

"The underemployment rate continues to remain high, but is still below the levels from 2016-17," said Mr Hockman.

The trend monthly underutilisation rate also remained steady at 13.7 per cent in January 2020, an increase of 0.4 percentage points over the past year.

States and territories trend unemployment rate

The monthly trend unemployment rate increased in Victoria and decreased in South Australia and Tasmania in January 2020. The unemployment rate remained steady in all other states and territories.

Over the year, unemployment rates fell in Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. Unemployment rates increased in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and the Northern Territory.

Seasonally adjusted data

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased by 0.2 percentage points to 5.3 per cent in January 2020, while the underemployment rate increased 0.3 percentage points to 8.6 per cent. The seasonally adjusted participation rate increased by 0.1 percentage points to 66.1 per cent, and the number of people employed increased by around 14,000.

The net movement of employed in both trend and seasonally adjusted terms is generally underpinned by over 300,000 people leaving employment and around 300,000 people entering employment in the month.

More details are in the January 2020 issue of Labour Force, Australia (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/ 6202.0) (cat. no. 6202.0). In addition, further information, including regional labour market information, can be found in the upcoming January 2020 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (https:// www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/6291.0.55.001) (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001), due for release on 27 February 2020.

These publications are available for free download (after release) from the ABS website: http://www.abs.gov.au (https://www.abs.gov.au) .

Media note

- There was no notable impact on Labour Force statistics from recent bushfires. Further information on this can be found in Assessing the impact of the bushfires on Labour Force statistics (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/ abs@.nsf/mf/6202.0) in this month's Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).

- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (https://www.abs.gov.au/) (ABS) must be attributed as the source.

- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team on 1300 175 070 or media@abs.gov.au (mailto:media@abs.gov.au) (8.30am - 5pm Monday - Friday AEDT).

- The ABS produces trend estimates to provide a more reliable indicator of the underlying behaviour of the Labour Force series. Trend estimates were introduced into the Labour Force series in the mid 1980s and are available back to February 1978. Trend estimates are considered the best indicators of the underlying behaviour in the

labour market. See paragraphs 29 to 38 of the Explanatory Notes (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/exnote/6202.0) in Labour Force, Australia (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6202.0) (cat. no. 6202.0).

- Labour Force Survey data is complemented by other ABS measures to build a comprehensive picture of the labour market.

- Jobs in Australia (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6160.0Main+Features12011-12%20to%202016-17?OpenDocument) (cat. no. 6160.0) data provides insights into all jobs held throughout the year.

- Labour Accounts (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6150.0.55.003) (cat. no. 6150.0.55.003) data provides the number of filled jobs at a point-in-time each quarter, while Labour Force, Australia (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6202.0) (cat. no. 6202.0) data measures the number of people employed each month.

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